

Message Text

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ACTION IO-13

INFO OCT-01 AF-08 EUR-12 ISO-00 IOE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00
PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01
SP-02 SS-15 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 USIE-00 EB-08 CU-02
TRSE-00 /083 W
-----121627Z 023798 /40

O R 121231Z FEB 77
FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 9266
AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE
US MISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE 2255
INFO AMEMBASSY ACCRA
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
AMEMBASSY LOME
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
AMEMBASSY NIAMEY
AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE
AMCONSUL CAPETOWN
AMCONSUL IBADAN
AMCONSUL KADUNA
AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN
AMEMBASSY BAMAKO
AMEMBASSY BANGUI
AMEMBASSY CONAKRY
AMEMBASSY COTONOU
AMEMBASSY DAKAR
AMEMBASSY FREETOWN

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CAPE TOWN ALSO FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, OVIP (YOUNG, ANDREW,) SCUL, NI

SUBJECT: REVIEW AND HIGHLIGHTS OF AMBASSADOR YOUNG'S VISIT

SUMMARY: AMBASSADOR YOUNG'S VISIT TO NIGERIA WAS OUTSTANDINGLY

SUCCESSFUL. FMG ACCORDED HIM EXCEPTIONAL TREATMENT, HONORING HIM AS IT WOULD A HEAD OF STATE. YOUNG HAD LENGTHY SUBSTANTIVE MEETING WITH FOUR VISITING HEADS OF STATE (MOBUTU, EYADEMA, NETO AND KOUNTCHE) AND HAD BRIEF CONVERSATIONS WITH THREE OTHERS (AHIDJO, OULD DADDAH, AND LAMIZANA) AND WITH PRIME MINISTER BRADSHAW OF ST. KITTS. HIGHLIGHT OF VISIT WAS FOUR-HOUR MEETING WITH NIGERIAN HEAD OF STATE OBASANJO, WHICH "DAILY TIMES" TERMED "PROBABLY THE MOST COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF WORLD AFFAIRS THE HEAD OF STATE HAS EVER HAD WITH A VISITING DIGNITARY ". OBASANJO TOLD YOUNG AND REPEATED ON NATIONAL TELEVISION THAT "STRAINED" US-NIGERIAN RELATIONS WERE A THING OF THE PAST AND THAT FMG LOOKING FORWARD TO NEW ERA OF CLOSE AND PRODUCTIVE RELATIONS WITH USG AND NEW WASHINGTON ADMINISTRATION. YOUNG WAS HONORED GUEST AT COLOSSAL KADUNA DURBAR ATTENDED BY 200,000 PARTICIPANTS. HE VISITED FESTAC VILLAGE AND NATIONAL THEATER IN LAGOS, WAS STAR ATTRACTION AT RECEPTION HOSTED BY AMBASSADOR EASUM, AND WAS GUEST OF HONOR AT INFORMAL DINNER GIVEN BY EXTAFF COMMISSIONER GARBA ON EVE OF YOUNG'S DEPARTURE FOR LONDON. TWO TENNIS MATCHES WERE SHOE-HORNED INTO SCHEDULE. VISIT GIVEN EUPHORIC NEWSPAPER, RADIO AND TV COVERAGE. END SUMMARY

1. IN FOUR-HOUR AUDIENCE WITH NIGERIAN HEAD OF STATE OBASANJO FEBRUARY 10, AMBASSADOR YOUNG EXCHANGED VIEWS ON WIDE RANGE OF SUBJECTS, INCLUDING SOUTHERN AFRICA, US-NIGERIAN RELATIONS AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL ISSUES. (REPORTS OF CONVERSATION WILL FOLLOW IN SEPTELS). SPECIAL TREATMENT AT ALL LEVELS OF FMG AND WARMTH OF ATMOSPHERE AND CANDOR DURING MEETING WITH OBASANJO AUGUR WELL FOR FUTRUE US-NIGERIAN RELATIONS. IN CLEAR SIGNAL THAT FMG CONSIDERS LAST YEAR'S PERIOD OF STRAINED RELATIONS A LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THING OF THE PAST, OBASANJO ASSERTED IN TELEVISED PRESS MEETING FOLLOWING HIS CONVERSATIONS WITH YOUNG THAT THERE WERE "NOW" RPT "NOW" NO PROBLEMS WITH US-NIGERIAN RELATIONS.

2. YOUNG MET WITH PRESIDENT MOBUTU THE EVENING OF HIS ARRIVAL IN LAGOS FEBRUARY 7. EARLY FEBRUARY 8 YOUNG PARTY FLEW TO KADUNA IN HEAD OF STATE'S NEW GULFSTREAM EXECUTIVE JET TO ATTEND LARGEST-EVER DURBAR ("MOUNTING OF THE HORSES" BY EMIRS AND CHIEFS) WHERE YOUNG WAS SEATED IN ROW WITH CHIEFS OF STATE AND BETWEEN EXTAFF COMMISSIONER GARBA AND PETROLEUM COMMISSIONER BUHARI. DURING HIS ONE-DAY STAY IN KADUNA, YOUNG HAD SEVERAL BRIEF EXCHANGES WITH PRESIDENTS OULD DADDAH, LAMIZANA, EYADEMA, AND AHIDJO, AND LONGER SUBSTANTIVE MEETINGS WITH PRESIDENTS NETO, KOUNTCHE AND EYADEMA. HE ALSO CHATTED WITH ST. KITTS PRIME MINISTER BRADSHAW.

3. UPON RETURN TO LAGOS FEBRUARY 9 YOUNG VISITED FESTAC VILLAGE WHERE AMERICAN FESTAC DANCERS AND DRUMMERS GREETED HIS ARRIVAL. AFTER LUNCH AT A VILLAGE MESSHALL HOSTED BY FESTAC OFFICIALS,

YOUNG TOURED THE NATIONAL THEATER AND VISITED ITS FESTAC EXHIBITS THAT EVENING HE WAS STAR ATTRACTION AT GALA RECEPTION FOR SOME 600 PERSONS HOSTED BY AMBASSADOR EASUM. GUESTS INCLUDED SECOND CONTINGENT OF AMERICAN FESTAC PARTICIPANTS. AMONG NIGERIAN DIGNITARIES ATTENDING WERE CHIEF JUSTICE AND OTHER SUPREME COURT JUSTICES, COMMISSIONER OF MINES AND POWER, MEA OFFICIALS, MILITARY OFFICERS, LAGOS STATE COMMISSIONERS, OTHER GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, AND CULTURAL, ACADEMIC, BUSINESS AND PRESS REPRESENTATIVES. STEVIE WONDER ATTENDED AS WELL, AND THREE AMERICAN FESTAC MUSICAL GROUPS PERFORMED.

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FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 9267

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CAPE TOWN ALSO FOR EMBASSY

4. FOLLOWING HIS FOUR-HOUR MEETING WITH HEAD OF STATE OBASANJO ON FEBRUARY 10, AMBASSADOR YOUNG LUNCHEDED WITH AMERICAN AND NIGERIAN BUSINESS/ECONOMIC PERSONALITIES AT DCM'S RESIDENCE, WAS LATER INTERVIEWED BY NIGERIAN NATIONAL TELEVISION AND, ALONG WITH GHANAIA FORAFFRS COMMISSIONER FELLI AND CHIEF OF STAFF OF GHANAIA AIR FORCE AND OTHERS, WAS ENTERTAINED BY GARBA AT INFORMAL LATE EVENING DINNER.

5. OTHER LAGOS ENGAGEMENTS INCLUDED APPEARANCES AT TWO PRIVATE PARTIES GIVEN BY NIGERIAN FRIENDS, A THIRTY-MINUTE MEETING WITH AMERICAN STAFF, AND TWO TENNIS MATCHES. ONE OF THESE MATCHES TOOK PLACE ON SAME COURTS WHERE ARTHUR ASHE WAS HASSLED AT GUN-POINT A YEAR AGO. IRONY WAS SHARPENED BY CHOICE OF YOUNG'S DOUBLES PARTNER, FMG SECRETARY AYIDA WHO GAVE AMBASSADOR ESUM THE FMG'S REQUEST THAT ASHE PLAY THAT MATCH IN SPIT OF NATIONAL MOURNING CIRCUMSTANCES. (RESULTS OF YOUNG/AYIDA SPORTIVE CONFRONTATION WITH EASUM AND LAGOS LAWN TENNIS PRESIDENT AL HADI ADEJUMO ARE AVAILABLE ONLY FROM USUN.)

6. FMG PULLED OUT ALL STOPS TO ENSURE THAT THE VISIT WAS A SUCCESS. YOUNG WAS ACCORDED EVERY COURTESY: SPECIAL POLICE PROTECTION AND SECURITY GUARDS, MOTORCYCLE ESCORTS, STATE HOUSE LIMOUSINES, AND GOVERNMENT QUARTERS IN KADUNA (ALSO OFFERED IN LAGOS BUT AFTER YOUNG WAS ENSCONCED IN AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE). A MAJOR ASPECT OF VISIT WAS EXPANSIVE AND ENTHUSIASTIC LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL PRESS COVERAGE WHICH YOUNG ATTRACTED.

7. COMMENT: THE FMG, REFLECTING IMPORTANT EXPECTATIONS OF THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION AND APPRECIATION OF SUCH INITIATIVES AS PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGES TO GENERAL OBASANJO AND THE EARLY VISIT BY A LEADING MEMBER OF THE ADMINISTRATION, APPEARS PREPARED CHANGE BOTH TONE AND SUBSTANCE OF ITS BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP WITH THE US. THE RECEPTION TENDERED AMBASSADOR YOUNG WAS INTENDED TO CONVEY THAT MESSAGE. THIS NEW ENVIRONMENT OF LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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MUTUAL TRUST AND CONFIDENCE SHOULD PRODUCE MAJOR OPPORTUNITIES

FOR IMPORTANT INITIATIVES FROM EITHER SIDE, AS WELL AS PROMISE
OF SIGNIFICANT LOWERING OF SOME OF THE OBSTACLES THAT HAVE
HINDERED ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL INTERCOURSE DURING THE PAST
EIGHTEEN MONTHS.
EASUM

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
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Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
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